

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 13430 282358Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-05 IO-13 CU-04 OMB-01 /082 W

-----093024 290000Z /73

R 260826Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4289

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: ANTI-MARTIAL LAW DEMONSTRATION

1. ON AUGUST 25, METROCOM POLICE BROKE UP AN ANTI-MARTIAL LAW RALLY ON DOWNTOWN MANILA WITH TRUCHEONS AND A WATER HOSE AFTER THE DEMONSTRATORS DID NOT OBEY AN ORDER TO DISPERSE. A NUMBER OF PERSONS REPORTEDLY WERE INJURED.

2. THE RALLY OSTENSIBLY WAS ORGANIZED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF MAJOR RELIGIOUS (WOMEN) SUPERIORS TO COINCIDE WITH WORLD PEACE THROUGH LAW CONFERENCE, (WPTLC). AT ABOUT 4:00 PM CROWD MAINLY OF STUDENTS GATHERED IN FRONT OF ST. THERESA'S COLLEGE, A CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOR WOMEN. CHURCH AND STUDENT LEADERS DENOUNCED THE MARCOS REGIME FOR VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS. AS THE RALLY DREW TO A CLOSE AT AROUND 9:00 PM, DEMONSTRATORS BEGAN TO SHOUT ANTI-MARCOS SLOGANS AND TO MARCH AWAY FROM SAINT THERESA'S. (SOME SOURCES SAY THEY WERE HEADED TWOARD UNIVERSITY BELT, OTHERS SAY TOWARD SITE OF WPTLC). POLICE BLOCKED BOTH ENDS OF STREET AND GAVE THE CROWD TWO MINUTES TO DISPERSE. WHEN THE CROWD DID NOT DISPERSE, POLICE THEN WADED IN WITH TRUCHEONS WHILE ATTEMPTING TO BREAK UP KNOTS OF STUDENTS WITH WATER HOSE. SOME STUDENTS HURLED STONES AND BOTTLES AT POLICE. IN THE MELEE WHICH FOLLOWED

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PAGE 02 MANILA 13430 282358Z

ED, MANY WERE HURT. AP REPORTED 100 DEMONSTRATORS WERE INJURED, AT LEAST THREE SERIOUSLY. TIMES JOURNAL REPORTED SEVENTEEN POLICEMEN AND FIVE STUDENTS INJURED. IN THE CONFUSION, ONE EXPLOSION SHOOK THE AREA, BUT APPARENTLY CAUSED NO INJURED. TIMES JOURNAL REPORTED EXPLOSION WAS PILLBOX BOMB THROWN BY STUDENT.

3. AT LEAST SIX AMERICAN DELEGATES TO THE WORLD PEACE THROUGH LAW CONFERENCE, INCLUDING DONALD LUCE, DEBORAH KAUFMAN, JOHN CAUGHLAN, AND THOMAS MILLER ATTENDED DEMONSTRATION. ACCORDING TO AP, BOTH CAUGHLIN AND LUCE ADDRESSED RALLY. CAUGHLAN REPORTEDLY ASSURED AUDIENCE HE WOULD REPORT TO HIS GOVERNMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY GOP. LUCE REPORTEDLY SAID, "WHY SHOULD AN AMERICAN LIKE ME TALK ABOUT OPPRESSION IN YOUR COUNTRY? IT'S BECAUSE THE GUNS AND BULLETS USED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT TO TERRIFY YOUR PEOPLE COME FROM MY COUNTRY, THE UNITED STATES." AT LEAST ONE OF THE AMERICANS REPORTEDLY TRIED TO REASON WITH POLICE NOT TO INTERVENE, BUT TO NO AVAIL.

4. ESTIMATES OF CROWD SIZE VARY FROM 600 (RODNEY TASKER OF FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW) TO 5,000 WHICH LIKE TIMES JOURNAL REPORTED STORY ON FRONT PAGE). APPARENTLY ORIGINAL RALLY PARTICIPANTS WERE JOINED BY OTHERS AS GROUP BEGAN TO MARCH, DOUBLING CROWD SIZE.

5. ORGANIZERS OF RALLY CLAIMED DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE CALLED SAINT THERESA'S MORNING OF AUGUST 26 AND THREATENED TO SHUT DOWN SCHOOL IF RALLY HELD IN ITS AUDITORIUM. AS A RESULT DEMONSTRATORS SPILLED OVER INTO SAN MARCELINO STREET ONE LANE OF WHICH WAS CLOSED TO TRAFFIC. NEVERTHELESS, RALLY WAS REPORTEDLY PEACEFUL AND DISCIPLINED UNTIL MARCH BEGAN.

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PAGE 03 MANILA 13430 282358Z

6. COMMENT: FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE OF ANTI-MARCOS DEMONSTRATION BY BOTH TIMES JOURNAL AND DAILY EXPRESS HIGHLY UNUSUAL AND PROBABLY REPRESENTS ATTEMPT TO DEMONSTRATE TO FOREIGN DELEGATES TO WPTLC THAT BASIC FREEDOMS WELL PROTECTED IN THE NEW SOCIETY. WE SUSPECT THOSE US DELEGATES WHO ATTENDED OR HAVE BY NOW HEARD ABOUT ST THERESA'S RALLY WILL LEAVE MANILA WITH JUST THE OPPOSITE IMPRESSION.

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 26-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decapton Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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